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The Bombshell That Led to Bermuda

When the chief architect of the cold war begins to dismantle his own handiwork, that is—or should be—news. But most American newspaper readers still do not realize the significance of Sir Winston Churchill's "new Locarno" speech last week. The bombshell that led to the hasty calling of the Bermuda conference was the most momentous—and the most poorly covered—story in many months. The *New York Times* did not give the Churchill speech in full text. Commentators shied away from a declaration which carried so many unpalatable implications for American foreign policy. The man who wanted to strangle Bolshevism in its cradle had suddenly announced that he was prepared to live with it in its prime.

Since Roosevelt's death, Churchill has been the Toscanini of Western foreign policy. The U.S. has footed the bills, but he has set the themes. It was Churchill who launched the Anglo-American alliance at Fulton in 1945, with that deadly phrase about an Iron Curtain rung down on Europe. It was Churchill who later the same year in Zurich proposed a Franco-German entente and a United States of Europe as a counterpoise against the East. It was Churchill who at Llandudno in October, 1948, struck the opening note of the "liberation" chorus. He wanted to push the Russians back to their old borders. He called for a showdown while the U.S. still had a monopoly of the atom bomb.

Now, five years later, Churchill has changed his tune. He no longer speaks as if the problem were simply one of dealing with a Russian menace. It is worth listening closely. "We all desire," he told the Commons, "that the Russian people should take their high place in world affairs, which is their due, *without feeling unsettled about their own security.*" The emphasis is new. The problem is no longer to deal with the diabolic, but with understandable mutual fears. The Russians are also people, and fear us as we fear them. Discourse has shifted from the cold war hallucinations still dominant here to the realm of the real world. And Churchill said he did not believe "the immense problem of reconciling the security of Russia with the freedom and safety of Western Europe is insoluble." This is a new language. It is not difficult to understand why the American press preferred to leave it untranslated.

What is Churchill's solution for reconciling the security of Russia with the security of Western Europe? A new Locarno. The Locarno Pact of 1925 gave France a British guarantee against a German attack and Germany a British guarantee against a French attack. Churchill as Chancellor of the Exchequer had a part in the framing of that treaty. But—and here we come to the crucial point—Locarno was not intended simply to make possible a Franco-German reconciliation. It was intended to free Germany from anxiety about her Western frontier so she would be free to strike toward the East.

A Locarno which would also safeguard Russia against attack from the West is a new kind of Locarno. The formula is the same. The effect is the reverse. The old Locarno was intended to facilitate a crusade against Communism. This new Locarno would formalize co-existence. Churchill's words, as they came in over the State Department ticker, must have seemed downright treasonable. "Russia has the right," Churchill said (to speak of Russia as having rights is itself an innovation), "to feel assured that, so far as human arrangements can run, the terrible events of the Hitler invasion will never be repeated. . . ."

The main objective of American foreign policy for several years has been to rearm Germany in order to repeat that invasion, this time more terribly than before because supplemented by American atomic bombing. And now let us pick up Churchill's words where we broke off and see the very climax of Albion's new perfidy. Russia also had a right, the sentence ended, to be assured ". . . that Poland will remain a friendly Power and a buffer, though not, I trust, a puppet, State." This says good-bye to "liberation." To make a new Locarno is to give up the "liberation" of Eastern Europe. A "free" Poland was the main concern of the liberationists, for the road to Moscow lies across Poland.

Our Richard has deserted to the Saracens. The vision dreamed up for the State Department by the Jesuits of Georgetown was a vision of a U.S. of Western Europe cemented by the confessional ties of the American supported Catholic Centre parties of Italy, France and Western Germany. The resurrection of a Roman Catholic Poland was to be a prime object of the new Crusade. Poland was to resume its role as a buffer against the East, against Bolshevism and beyond Bolshevism against the Orthodox heresy. Now this spokesman for Henry VIII's treacherous realm speaks of Muscovy's right to have Poland as "a friendly power and a buffer," adding—and here we see Churchill's genius for diplomacy—"though not, I trust, a puppet State." With that deft touch, Churchill opened the door to an area of negotiation in which Russian security, Polish national pride and American liberationist slogans could be reconciled. To make such a solution seem possible must appear dangerously subversive in State Department eyes.

This is not the full measure of the havoc threatened by Churchill's bombshell. "To consolidate the peace of Europe" by such arrangements "as the key to the peace of mankind" is also to give up the complementary dream of "liberating" China. A new Locarno guaranteeing the new Poland and Russia against German and Western aggression presupposes also co-existence in the East, recognition of the new China. Otherwise the effect would be to free Moscow from European anxiety and enable her all the more effectively to support

colonial uprisings against the remains of the Western empires in the Far East. Churchill is not proposing to preside over a new Locarno in order to liquidate Britain's holdings of tin and rubber in Malaya. But the Far Eastern corollaries require the abandonment of Chiang Kai-shek and resumption of normal relations with Communist China. To see this is to see why Eisenhower is packing his bags so hastily for a week-end in Bermuda.

Churchill's initiative is initiative in calling off the cold war. When he told the Commons "It would, I think, be a mistake to assume that nothing can be settled with Soviet Russia unless or until everything is settled" the words were deceptively offhand. One of the basic axioms of American "total diplomacy" as launched by Acheson and carried on by Dulles has been to avoid piecemeal and peripheral settlements because these would relax tension and slow up the pace of rearmament. The idea was to build up such overwhelming power as to make possible peace by dictation or swift victory by atomic blitzkrieg. Here again the new Churchill line undercuts American strategy.

The Issues in the Arrest of Cedric Belfrage

Crucial issues are raised by the arrest of Cedric Belfrage, editor of the *National Guardian*. His interrogation by the McCarthy and Velde committees illustrates again the way in which these Congressional Inquisitions usurp the functions of a grand jury. Belfrage was questioned about Elizabeth Bentley's story that Belfrage as a member of British Intelligence during the last war had given information to Soviet Intelligence. A Federal grand jury heard this story in 1947 and questioned Belfrage about it at length. No indictment was returned. Now the old charges were rehashed in public session under circumstances which permit no fair and orderly rejoinder.

The country has grown so accustomed to this abuse that few any longer question it. Martin Dies said fifteen years ago that he proposed to use the House Un-American Activities Committee as a grand jury. The procedure combines the worst features of the public pillory with none of the good features of the grand jury. The grand jury safeguards the reputation of the accused by hearing him and his accusers in secret. Nothing is made public unless the grand jury is sufficiently impressed to return an indictment. The indictment must still be tried. But these Inquisitorial committees may destroy a man's reputation in a single sitting by the device of asking dirty questions.

A related issue has to do with the breakdown in the separation of power within the government. McCarthy asked that a representative of the Immigration Service be present at the hearing. It was made plain that Belfrage was to be arrested for deportation as soon as he pleaded his privilege. The Immigration Service was to act—or else. The Immigration Service is responsible to the Attorney General. In the Belfrage case, McCarthy was acting as a super Attorney General, just as in the case of the Greek shipowners he acted as a super Secretary of State. Must Americans be reminded, two centuries after Montesquieu, that the whole theory of the separation of powers on which our government rests was intended to prevent just such concentration of legislative, judicial and execu-

Churchill's view of internal developments in Russia since Stalin's death also diverges strikingly from the official American line. The State Department, its eyes shut tightly, insists that nothing has happened. It is essential to cold war policy to allow nothing to disturb the endlessly inculcated view that the Kremlin always has and always will be occupied by monsters until the evil is finally exorcised by nuclear fission and holy water. But here is Churchill saying unexpectedly and exasperatingly that he regards "some of the internal manifestations and the apparent change of mood" since Stalin's death "as far more important than what is happening outside." He is anxious that "the NATO Powers" do nothing which might "supersede or take the emphasis out of what may be a profound movement of Russian feeling." To imply that reform in the direction of a less draconian Russian regime is possible without crack-up, war or counter revolution; to speak as Churchill does of a "spontaneous and healthy evolution which may take place in Russia" is his ultimate apostasy.

(Next Week: Why Churchill Shifted)

tive functions in one man's hands? McCarthyism is not a new phenomenon.

The most important issue of all revolves around the freedom of the press and its role in the fight for peace. The *National Guardian* is the unofficial organ of the Progressive Party. It is one of the few voices left which disagree with the official cold war line. Mr. Attlee was telling the literal truth when he said there were some Americans who don't want peace; they may be few, but they are powerful. He might have added that there are few Americans left who dare speak up openly for peace. The attack on Belfrage and the *Guardian* is an attempt to intimidate and silence those few.

McCarthy is hunting for bigger game. James Aronson, managing editor of the *Guardian*, was asked at the hearing in Washington whether he had ever taken instructions on the handling of the news from the Communist Party while employed by the *New York Post* and the *New York Times*. Aronson denied this. The groundwork is being laid for "expert" testimony by Matusow and Budenz with which McCarthy, Velde and Jenner may harass what little remains of independence and liberalism in the American press.

The respectables look the other way. The *New York Times* spoke up for James Wechsler of the *New York Post* but the *Post* did not speak up for the *Guardian*. True, Belfrage's case is more difficult: he neither confessed, recanted nor informed. But the difference clarifies the real issue which must be faced if freedom of the press is to be preserved.

Congress, under the First Amendment, may make no law abridging freedom of the press. A law imposing some kind of "loyalty" standard on the personnel and policies of the press would be patently unconstitutional. The crucial question is whether a Congressional committee can do by indirection under the guise of investigation what it clearly could not do directly. To permit Congress to investigate the ideas of newspapers and newspapermen is to permit the enforcement of conformity by harassment. Unless such right is denied the door is wide open for any adventurer like McCarthy.

I. F. Stone's Weekly

• Editor and Publisher, I. F. STONE

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COMMENT

Last Week's Issue

There is nothing like a short stretch as a small capitalist to make one look forward to the Socialist revolution, if Messrs. McCarthy, Jenner and Velde will excuse the expression. Our latest trouble as an entrepreneur: last Monday a week the printers and mailers in all of Washington's commercial printing establishments went out on strike. The *Weekly*, which goes to press on Tuesdays, had to suspend publication. This, and not a plot by the Postoffice, explains why you did not get an issue last week. This week's was printed and mailed in New York.

Morale Builders

Early Soviet novels used a vivid phrase, "former people," about the remnants of the dispossessed ruling class. On the inhospitable sidewalks of Washington these days, the editor often feels like one of the "former people," a phantom out of the New Deal past. A few more years of the current trend and we may furtively be hawking forbidden books by Jefferson and bootlegging copies of the *Federalist Papers* to passersby who can't resist the temptation of having a peek at subversive literature, despite the danger of being picked up by thought police patrols.

Every once in a while, however, something happens which is a morale builder. I went to a hearing on "front" organizations before the Subversive Activities Control Board and several days later my secretary told me someone had phoned from the Board to ask whether I would be sure and send a copy of anything I wrote about the hearing. The thought of the Board waiting feverishly to see what I was going to say about it perked me up on end.

Victor Lasky has also been a help. He runs something called the Spadea Syndicate. Last week he kindly sent me advance copies of a four page article by my old friend, John Chamberlain, called

"Clap-Trap and The Atom." The editor's note with the article said Chamberlain had just completed a two-month tour of atomic installations but devoted most of the piece to an attack on the article in our issue of April 25, "Atomic Power: Biggest Steal of the G.O.P. Era."

On the basis of this article, Chamberlain predicted that before there is any alteration in the atomic energy law "the air of Congressional Committee rooms will undoubtedly ring with charges that the wicked capitalists are out to 'steal' the atom from the 'people.'" I sadly suspect that Chamberlain is overly optimistic, but I carried his article around with me for several days. It made me feel like Quite A Molder of Public Opinion.

Footnote on POW's

I called the Pentagon last week to get some figures on prisoners of war. I had read, as no doubt you have, half a dozen articles, editorials and speeches explaining that the U.S. was so adamant about voluntary repatriation because it wanted to encourage mass desertions from the enemy side in the event of World War III. One writer, the respected and scholarly William Henry Chamberlin, even went so far as to suggest that "The fear of such defection has been a factor restraining the Kremlin from other military adventures."

The figures do not give much support to these views. The Chinese have been in the Korean war two and a half years. If their armies were, as so often pictured to the American public, masses of unwillingly impressed men sent into battle by a regime they hate, one would expect them to surrender easily. The number of Chinese poured into the Korean war has been estimated by our own military as high as a million men. Certainly they number several hundred thousand. Yet the latest figure on Chinese prisoners held is only 21,000.

If the line being handed out to explain our position on POW's at Panmunjom is true one would expect the figures to show a sharp increase in surrenders during the months in which we have insisted that enemy prisoners shall not be forced to return against their will. Truce talks began in July, 1951. The voluntary repatriation issue was first raised in December, 1951, and has been the main topic of disagreement and propaganda since that time. Yet it does not appear to have had much influence.

The Pentagon's figures showed that we held 17,382 Chinese prisoners of war when the truce talks began. This had risen to 20,678 by the end of the year 1951 when the voluntary repatriation issue was raised. The current figure (available only in the round number) is 21,000. This does not support the picture of mass defections encouraged by the offer of asylum.

Right of Asylum

I believe in the right of asylum and do not think any man should be forced to go back to his own country if he does not want to. But the affirmation of this moral principle at Panmunjom does not prevent our own government from picking up hundreds of long term residents of this country, many with American children, and ordering them deported. We practice "involuntary repatriation" at home while preaching against it abroad.

New Obstacles to Peace

The real moral issue at Panmunjom is to ensure freedom of choice to prisoners. POW's ought not to be polled on their political views while held captive; the conditions are those of duress. But a soldier who tells a neutral commission that he does not want to be repatriated should have the right to go free.

The real difficulty is the question of face. The American military negotiators have sought to force concessions on the issue under conditions which would cause the most loss of face to the Chinese.

If the Chinese, after the new recess, should accept the terms offered on POW's, watch for new obstacles to an armistice. The so-called armistice agreement carries a notation saying that it is all tentative. There is already talk in Washington of reviving older issues thought to be settled. One is whether the North Koreans may build air fields during an armistice. Another is the exact location of the cease-fire line.

Condolences

To the Senate Internal Security subcommittee on the unfortunate demise of one of its more sensational recent revelations. A certain Thad Mason claimed to have been a Soviet spy and stolen 100 blueprints from a General Motors plant in Cleveland. He testified that he passed the blueprints on to a confederate who worked as a counterman in the plant cafeteria who passed them on in turn to another confederate who was a dishwasher "in the basement." There the dishwasher would film the prints in between washing dishes, and pass the originals back up again. A spokesman for the General Motors plant now explains that it has no basement and the Department of Justice is investigating Mason.

Hat's Off

To Senator Taft, for blocking passage on the consent calendar last week of the McCarran bill to deprive witnesses before Congressional committees of their privilege under the Fifth Amendment; to Senator Kilgore, for mustering opinions against the bill from Governor Dewey, Dean Griswold of Harvard Law School and Donald Richberg; and to the Wall Street Journal, for an editorial against the bill which has had great weight in the Senate.

Any day now we expect McCarran to open an attack on "crypto-liberalism."

JENNINGS PERRY'S PAGE

Cohn Takes to Phone and Saves the Public Pence

I think Mr. Roy Cohn and I have just about worked out a way to help Congress save the Republic some money. The high points of our collaboration thus far are as follows:

Shortly after noon on Feb. 23, I was handed a paper commanding me to appear the next morning at 9:30 in Washington to testify what I might know relative to subject matters under consideration by the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations. The paper was water marked with the Great Seal of our nation and signed Joe McCarthy, with flourishes.

I had been washing the boat under the palm tree. I dried my hands on a sponge and looked in the morning paper to see what wind the subcommittee had up: apparently it was the Voice of America. I sat down and wrote a nice note explaining why it was impossible to reach Washington from Key West by 9:30 the next day.

"I'll gladly come up," I said, "if that is the wish of Congress, though I fear it will be a waste of the taxpayers' money, since I have little but opinion to give that would be of the slightest use to your subcommittee." I pointed out that as an editor and columnist my opinions of practically everything had been in print for many years. I gave the phone at which I would be available on any day on which the weather was not good. "Other days," I concluded, "I probably will be fishing."

Two days later, a Mr. Hawkins phoned for the subcommittee, inquired of the fishing and told me that another time the subcommittee would let me know beforehand. I repeated my view that the whole thing was a waste of money—my money as a taxpayer, too. It was a pleasant and uneventful chat.

At 6 p.m. on March 5, I had just come in from talking sailfishing with Capt. Jakie Key, who used to fish Zane Grey, when Washington opened the wire again. The voice said it was Roy Cohn, chief counsel for the subcommittee—and, "We'd like to have you tomorrow morning."

I vaguely recalled having heard the name, though at the time I would have settled for Cowan or Kahn. I didn't ask Mr. Cohn how he spelled it. I told him the facts of time and

space, that the last plane from Key West for the day had gone, and that I couldn't at the fastest be in Washington before the next afternoon. Whereat my caller, some little put out, asked if I would hold the wire.

After several minutes, during which I worried at the cost of the tolls, Mr. Cohn came back on and, asking and obtaining my permission to put a few questions "which might help this situation," informed me that his matter related to an article I'd written for the Daily Compass. I assured him I had written a great many articles for the Compass. He did not say which article. Instead he asked me if I was now or ever had been a member of the Communist party. I told him, "Never in my life."

"Were you," he said, "when you wrote for the Compass?"

"I said never in my life."

"But you were a member of some Communist front organizations?"

"Not to my knowledge."

"Not to your knowledge . . . And that is how you would reply before the committee?"

"That is right," I said, watching the sunset redden the waters of the Bight. And Mr. Cohn said, "Well, we will let you know." I reminded him that he had my phone, and he thanked me. And that is all I ever expect to hear from Mr. Cohn and the Subcommittee on Investigations of the Senate Committee on Government Operations.

It all was rather silly and expensive. Just having Joe McCarthy's autograph certainly is not worth the part of my tax that has to go to pay for these calls. And yet, I have thought since, how much more expensive it would have been had I, as commanded out of hand, rushed off to Washington from the fishing grounds 1200 miles away. There would have been the planes, hotels, cabs, meals, tips and, for the sake of civilization, perhaps a martini or two.

Mr. Cohn got his little query off of his mind, and packed himself away to Europe to get a man fired for calling him a gumshoe. A phone call sufficed (a postcard would have done as well), and I gladly contribute the difference toward retirement of the national debt.

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